

## SHAFTER-WASCO IRRIGATION DISTRICT

### NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR THE ROTATIONAL FALLOWING PROJECT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Shafter-Wasco Irrigation District (SWID) plans to adopt a negative declaration for the Shafter-Wasco Irrigation District Voluntary Rotational Land Fallowing Program Project. The public hearing will be held by the District's Board of Directors in a special board meeting on Wednesday September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 2:00 pm, at the District Office, 16294 Central Valley Hwy, Wasco, CA 93280.

To comply with SGMA, a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) was developed for crucial groundwater basins in California. The Kern Groundwater Authority (KGA) is one of eleven (11) Groundwater Sustainability Agency's (GSAs) within the San Joaquin Valley. SWID is a member of the KGA. In 2015, SWID began implementation of the SWID Recharge Project to help achieve sustainable groundwater levels and avoid the corresponding adverse environmental and economic burden associated with groundwater declines, including increased use of power and energy resources as well as the potential for fallowing of agricultural lands in the District.

The main sustainability goal is to maintain an economically viable groundwater resource. One of the multi-pronged approaches is to provide a program to allow the fallowing of agricultural lands for the purpose of reducing water demands relying less on groundwater sources for agricultural irrigation. Long-term groundwater sustainability goals are to implement project and management actions to both increase water supplies and reduce demands within SWID's management basin. Specific to the reduction in irrigation demand, SWID proposes a Voluntary Rotational Land Fallowing Program. The SWID Board of Directors would decide annually if there is a need to fallow land to reduce irrigation water demand and if there would be a sufficient budget available in the Program and Management Action portion of the SWID Management Area 2 (MA-2) budget to compensate the landowners for fallowing efforts.

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), an Initial Study/Negative Declaration has been prepared, describing the degree of potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. The District has assessed the potential environmental impacts of this proposed project and has determined that they will be less than significant. Copies of the Initial Study and proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration are on file and available for public review at the District Office, 16294 Central Valley Hwy, Wasco, CA 93280. The public review period during which the District will receive comments on the proposed Negative Declaration will begin on August 27, 2020 and end on September 28, 2020. Comments should be in writing, if possible, and addressed to Dena Giacomini at Provost & Pritchard, 1800 30<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 280, Bakersfield CA 93301, or at [dgiacomini@ppeng.com](mailto:dgiacomini@ppeng.com).

The site has been reviewed in accordance with Government Code Section 65962.5 and is not listed as hazardous waste or materials site.